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CHEROKEE COUNTY
ELECTIONS &
VOTER REGISTRATION

Election Connection



Anne Dover, Director, with poll workers, day two of Risk Limiting Audit for the November 3rd General Election

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From The Director's Desk

This week we celebrated Thanksgiving, but we also celebrated the successful conclusion of another election season.

I have always said that people who work in an elections office are different from coworkers in an ordinary office. The work we do comes with an incredible amount of stress, long hours, and pressure. Every decision, every action, and every move we make is under a microscope. It takes a special kind of team to navigate all of that together.

I truly could not ask for a better group of people. I am so blessed to call you my work family. We stand beside one another through thick and thin. Sometimes we cry together, sometimes we fight through the tough days together, sometimes we disagree, and sometimes all we need is a hug to remind us that we're not in it alone.

We pray for one another, encourage one another, lift each other up, and most importantly, we love one another.

Not every day is easy and not every moment is perfect, but at the end of the day, we know we have each other. That means more to me than you will ever know.

A big part of what makes our elections family so special is our incredible group of poll workers. Some of these poll workers have been by my side and welcomed me 19 years ago when I first started working with Cherokee County Elections.

Over the years, they have become so much more than poll workers. They are friends, familiar faces, trusted teammates, and truly an extension of our elections family. There simply aren't enough words to express how much this part of our family means to me.

We've shared quite a few adventures along the way, from pet snakes making appearances in the voting area to a car crashing right through our building! Through it all, one thing has never changed: their dedication.

Our recent risk-limiting audit is just one more example of the heart and commitment they bring to everything they do. For two and a half days, they worked tirelessly, counting and recounting more than 100,000 votes. Through long hours, they continued to smile, laugh, encourage one another, and give their very best to ensure the most accurate results possible.

That is who our poll workers are. They show up, they give their time, they serve their community, and they do it with a level of dedication that never goes unnoticed.

Our poll workers are the true heroes of our elections, and I am so incredibly grateful for each and every one of them. I can't wait to celebrate this amazing group at our Poll Worker Appreciation Luncheon in February. They deserve every bit of recognition and appreciation we can give them!

To our poll workers: Thank you for your time, your dedication, your laughter, your friendship, and for being such an important part of our Cherokee County Elections family. We couldn't do this without you!

I am proud of what we accomplish together, and grateful for the family we have become.

I wish each of you a very blessed Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year!

Anne Dover, Director

Hope you enjoy the family recipe on page 4!







Investing In Our People: Strengthening the Poll Worker Team

By Grace Waddell, Electronic Systems & Training Manager

Top L to R: Poll Worker Appreciation 2025; New Poll Worker Training Class (one of seven provided)
Bottom L to R: Poll workers process absentee ballots: Packing the equipment for polling location set up; Staff packing poll manager's car to complete set uup of polling location

Behind every successful election is a dedicated team of poll workers and technicians who make the voting experience possible. Recruiting, retaining, and training these individuals was one of the Elections Office's primary goals for 2026, with a continued commitment to building a knowledgeable, prepared, and dependable team.

Inline with this goal, our office hosted five (5) Poll Worker Meet & Greet events that were attended by 190 people, giving prospective poll workers an opportunity to meet elections staff, learn about election day responsibilities, ask questions, and discover how they could serve their community. These events helped generate interest and resulted in an increase in the number of new poll workers by 90, who joined our team.

Recruitment is only one part of building a strong poll worker team. Retaining experienced poll workers, recognizing their service, and continuing to build a positive relationship with them are equally important. Our returning poll workers bring valuable experience, knowledge, and continuity to election operations.

Training poll workers is one of the first and most crucial steps in the election process. Poll worker training lasts for 3-4 weeks and is split between the different levels of poll workers – Managers and Assistant Managers, Returning Clerks, and New Clerks. Poll worker training covers any change in election procedure or legislation, any issues that were encountered from previous elections, fundamentals of being a poll worker, and equipment training.

After the conclusion of poll worker training, our office is ready to dive into the Logic & Accuracy (L&A) testing of all the machines. During this process, the office brings in our trained poll worker technicians to help complete this task. L&A lasts anywhere from 3 days up to a week and half, depending on the size of the election and how much equipment goes out to each location. When testing the equipment, our technicians will load the election project onto all the machines, print 3-5 test ballots per machine, verify that everything matches, seal all compartments, and package the equipment so that it is ready to transport to each facility.

During Advance Voting and on Election Day, the Elections Office staff work around the clock to be on call for all poll workers at all polling places. Our technicians manage their territories and perfom on site help to any location in need. We could not run successful elections without the hard work and dedication of our poll workers and technicians.

The work is still not over once the election is complete. Each county is required to conduct a Risk Limiting Audit after each election. The batches of ballots that are chosen to be audited are randomly selected by the Secretary of State's office through the dice roll. We bring in a team of auditors, around 10-12 poll workers, to hand count the races selected to ensure that number matches the machine totals. This is a difficult process, usually resulting in many ballots to audit. We are so grateful for the poll workers who continually show up to complete this task for us.

The work we have invested in building a stronger, more experienced poll worker team in 2026 is an important step toward ensuring we are ready for the anticipated demands of the 2028 election year.

Our poll workers are the face of elections in our community. We are grateful to every individual who gives their time and talent to serve Cherokee County voters.

100 Years Old! A special story from the November 3rd General Election comes to us from the Conns Creek community. Edna Padgett turned 100 years old this November and when she came out to vote – the poll worker team surprised her with a Happy Birthday sign. Edna called her daughter, Patsy Jordan, to tell her that "they want me to come vote, you need to come over here and get me … and make sure my hair looks good!" Patsy was so touched by the attention that was paid to her mother that she shared a heartfelt post on social media. Both Edna and Patsy speak very highly of the poll worker team and the staff at the Elections Office.



L to R: Edna Padgett and Donna Towns, Poll Manager at Conns Creek polling location

Building Connections, Sharing Knowledge: Community Outreach & Voter Education

By Donna Kosicki, Community Outreach Specialist



L to R: Poll Workers Terry Wright and Bob Kosicki; and Tannen Haymore, Jody Gramling, and Donna Kosicki at Schmooza Palooza

Cherokee County Elections' Voter Education program began in late 2024 and is now in its second year. A guiding distinction shapes the work we have completed: **community outreach is about building relationships, voter education is about sharing election information.** Put another way, community outreach opens the door, and voter education is the conversation that happens once you're inside.

In 2026, the focus was on expanding events and reaching people in the community to provide the information voters need to feel prepared to vote. Outreach audiences grew beyond senior centers and high schools to include civic organizations and churches. Engagement with local and state legislators also became more intentional.

41 community outreach and voter education events were conducted, up from 10 in 2025; includes senior center visits, presentations in the community, and voter education sessions and tours at the Elections Office. Staff connected with residents at the Cherokee Chamber of Commerce's *Schmooza Palooza* at Woodstock City Church and the *S.A.L.T. Senior Extravaganza* at His Hands Church. Poll workers joined the outreach, too. Staff saw more than 1,000 people and spoke with more than 350 about elections and voter registration, compared with 225 people reached in 2025.

High school voter registration drives were held in April, resulting in **153 student registrations**, up from 104 in 2025. All six Cherokee County high schools are encouraged to participate. Students who are at least 17½ may register; their registration becomes active when they turn 18.

Communication remained an important part of the program. The quarterly *Election Connection* newsletter and electronic updates share information, and the email distribution list grows daily. To receive the newsletter and updates, email Donna at dxkosicki@cherokeecountyga.gov. New branding items introduced this year included a lapel pin, roll-up banner, and poster.

Staff also launched a virtual collaborative with outreach specialists and interested colleagues in county election offices across Georgia. Quarterly Zoom sessions allow the sharing of ideas and learning from one another.

National award recognition and acknowledgment from the U.S. Elections Assistance Commission and Cherokee County Board of Commissioners affirm the value of this office. Looking ahead, as Georgia moves toward selecting and implementing a new statewide voting system, new events and sessions will be scheduled for voters to attend. These connections, to be announced next year, will be valuable as new equipment and procedures are introduced. The outreach and voter education efforts built today will help keep election information accessible and understandable as Cherokee County prepares for the 2028 election year and beyond.



Cherokee County Elections Staff Recogition at the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners

Your Board of Elections: Oversight, Accountability, and Service

By Glen Johnson, Chairman

Behind every election is a Board of Elections helping ensure the process follows Georgia law and State Election Board rules.

The Cherokee County Board consists of four members appointed by the Board of Commissioners—currently two Republicans and two Democrats—who elect a fifth member to serve as Chairperson.

The Board oversees the Elections Office, addresses election-related questions, adjudicates complaints and challenges, and certifies election results. Members also visit polling locations during elections to check in with poll managers and observe operations.

Think of us as referees: **we interpret and apply the rules, we do not make them.**

This year, the Board oversaw five elections and one recount. We also welcomed new member James Adams and returning member Scott Little.

The Board meets the first Monday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in the Commission Meeting Room at the Bluffs. Meetings are open to the public. We welcome your participation!

Martha Washington Candy

This is an old recipe that Yannie and Neno used to make (Anne's grandparents)

1 cup butter, softened

4 cups powdered sugar

1 can Eagle Brand milk

2 cups shredded coconut

2 cups chopped pecans

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

2 cups semi sweet chocolate chips

Paraffin wax (use with the chocolate chips, about ¼ of the block)

Mix butter, sugar, and Eagle Brand milk in a large mixing bowl. Add coconut, pecans, and vanilla. Mix well. Chill until firm.

Form into small balls, place on baking sheets lined with wax paper. Chill until very firm.

Melt chocolate chips in a double boiler over simmering water. Using a toothpick, dip balls. Let cool on wax paper. Enjoy, keep refrigerated!

2027 Election Calendar Summary – From The Office Of The Secretary Of State, Elections Division (in case you were wondering!)

ELECTION	ELECTION DATE	ADVANCE VOTING DATES	REGISTRATION DEADLINE
Special Election	March 16, 2027	February 22, 2027 to March 12, 2027	February 16, 2027
Special Election Runoff	April 13, 2027	As soon as possible, but no later than April 5, 2027	February 16, 2027
Special Election	June 15, 2027	May 24, 2027 to June 11, 2027	May 17, 2027
Special Election Runoff	July 13, 2027	As soon as possible, but no later than July 6, 2027	May 17, 2027
Special Election	September 21, 2027	August 30, 2027 to September 17, 2027	August 23, 2027
Special Election Runoff	October 19, 2027	As soon as possible, but no later than October 12, 2027	August 23, 2027
General Election/Special Election	November 2, 2027	October 12, 2027 to October 29, 2027	October 4, 2027
General Election/Special Election Runoff	November 30, 2027	As soon as possible, but no later than November 22, 2027	October 4, 2027

KEY RESOURCES

- Cherokee County Elections & Voter Registration – cherokeegavotes.com
- Secretary of State (SOS) website – sos.ga.gov
- MyVoterPage – mvp.sos.ga.gov
- SOS Online Voter Registration (OLVR) – sos.ga.gov/s/olvr-home
- State Election Board – sos.ga.gov/state-election-board

What Circumstances Create a Special Election or Special Election Runoff?

Under **O.C.G.A. § 21-2-2 (33)**, Georgia defines a special election as: "*An election that arises from some exigency or special need outside the usual routine*."

Common examples include: vacancy in an elected office, death of an elected official, resignation, failure to qualify or assume office, recall election, referendum or ballot question or municipal vacancy, or conduct runoffs resulting from special elections.

This calendar identifies potential statutory election dates; it does not mean a special election will necessarily be called on any of those dates.

Cherokee County Board of Elections

Glen Johnson, Chair
Julie Glade, Vice-Chair
John Wallace, Secretary
Scott Little, Member
James Adams, Member

Cherokee County Elections & Voter Registration Staff

Anne Dover, Director
Janis Judge, Assistant Director
Julie Roberts, Elections Specialist
Chris Chester, Warehouse Manager
Grace Waddell, Electronic Systems & Training Manager
Trent Nations, Electronic Systems & Training Specialist
Tannen Haymore, Data Quality Specialist
Ginger Millsap, Registration Manager
Logan Myers, Voter Services Specialist
Jody Gramling, Voter Services Specialist
Donna Kosicki, Community Outreach Specialist

Cherokee County Elections & Voter Registration

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Call or email with any question you have for our elections staff!

Office Hours: Monday to Friday (except on holidays observed by Cherokee County government) 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

Cherokee County 1831 GEORGIA